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TO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA PRIORITY 2360
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8250
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: TURKEY:ONE DAY STRIKE PROTESTS INDUSTRIAL
ACCIDENTS AT ISTANBUL SHIPYARDS

REF: A. ISTANBUL 180

[1](#)B. ISTANBUL 363

[1](#)1. (U) The Ship Construction and Repair Workers, Trade Union (Limter-Is) held a one day strike on June 16 to protest 14 recent deaths at Istanbul's Tuzla shipyards. According to press reports, thousands of workers and union supporters reportedly demonstrated against the dangerous work environment at the shipyards where 14 workers have died within the last six months; scene of a series of fatalities since March (reftel A). No one was reportedly injured or arrested as a result of the strike.

[1](#)2. (U) Members of Limter-Is, which is attached to the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Union (DISK), carried banners attacking the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) as "the murderers in Tuzla". Opposition Republican People,s Party (CHP) deputy Cetin Soysal, and pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) deputies Akin Birdal and Sabahat Tuncel also participated in the protests. In addition, the Marine Engineers Chamber, the Transportation Union (Nakliyat-Is), United Metal Workers (Birlesik Metal-Is), and the Genc-Sen union demonstrated with Limter-Is at the shipyard. Suleyman Celebi, President of DISK, said the shipyards in Tuzla should fully comply with worker health and job security regulations and the contractor system (see reftel A for details) should be abolished.

[1](#)3. (U) The peaceful demonstration in Tuzla was a marked contrast with other recent Istanbul pro-labor marches. Over 500 labor supporters were arrested during this year's violent May Day demonstrations near Taksim Square for which the AKP also took heat (reftel B). A two-day strike that Limter-Is organized at the Tuzla shipyards 27-28 February also resulted violence with 75 workers and union members were arrested.

[1](#)4. (SBU) COMMENT: Little has changed since the media began to focus on Tuzla conditions earlier in the year, despite continued work related deaths. Shipyards continue to rely primarily on unskilled subcontracted labor; one of the primary causes of the work-related accidents according to many observers (reftel A). Workers are often undocumented or desperate for employment. The Parliament appointed a commission to look into the industrial accidents at Tuzla, however this group took weeks to form and has not yet finished its investigation.

WIENER